



Dear Friends and Supporters!

How quickly time goes by! In the last newsletter in August, I mentioned the upcoming trip to Ethiopia and visiting Project Emmanuel. In the meantime, it has already been a while since I have done that and I have four very intensive months behind me! I now finally have time to write again (bad weather activity☺), and with my “Bird of passage travel diary”, (only in German), you can read all about my Ethiopia adventures. The newsletter contains brief news on current developments.

My disabled friends in Soddo also specifically instructed me to pass on their warm greetings and thanks for all of your support, your gifts and your prayers. These are a great encouragement for many disabled persons in Ethiopia, they are life-changing help and they give these people a new life perspective ☺!



Members of Project Emmanuel



Mesfin and his family (new project member)

So there I went, with a huge pile of luggage and my “relief work vest”, as always jammed full of material, and equipped with my hiking sticks that I take for self-defense, as well as medical utensils such as a stethoscope and an otoscope (for ear examinations). On October 5, after working at the medical practice in the morning, I began my voyage to Ethiopia at 15:00 hrs.! You can read everything else in my travel diary, in which I report on the different places I visited on my Ethiopia trip this year (Bright Future street children project, Addis, and Project Emmanuel, Soddo). The text (only in German) is enhanced with photographs that illustrate the everyday lives of my Ethiopian friends...

News from Project Emmanuel, Soddo

In the workshop that produces mobility aids, a lot has happened since my visit in October: the storage room was freshly painted, cleared up, electrical lines in the workshop were repaired, and the disabled men are currently working on producing a larger “stock” of mobility aids, i.e. 500 pairs of crutches, 20 wheelchairs and some Twikes (three-wheel, hand-pedaled bicycles). A larger order came from Kambatta, a city in the region, where there is a large number of impoverished disabled persons who were registered, who need either a wheelchair or crutches in order to “get back on their feet”, so to speak, but who cannot afford to buy those. The Emmanuel Switzerland Association’s benevolent support fund (BENEVOL FUND) makes it possible to donate the urgently needed mobility aids to these destitute disabled persons. They are ever so happy and grateful for this 😊!



Manufacturing mobility aids: Wheelchairs – Wooden “American” crutches – Metal crutches



SCH electrician Temesgegn “in action”



Freshly painted



Tidied up the Swiss way!





Checking needs in Kambatta – many disabled persons waiting for mobility aids or orthopedic operations, braces, leg prostheses

The Mother Theresa nurses in the 500-bed Sidst Kilo Hospital, Addis Abeba also received crutches and wheelchairs as gifts. The nuns are very committed to helping the poorest of the poor in many Ethiopian cities, and it is a privilege for Emmanuel to be able to support their service by delivering mobility aids.



Acknowledgment of receipt from the Mother Theresa Hospital Sidst Kilo 10/2019 - Wheelchairs for the Mother Theresa Hospital in Addis

Melese, the director of Emmanuel, and Bereket, his new secretary, have compiled long lists with many names of disabled persons who require orthopedic help. One list contains over 100 names of children waiting for free operations in the CURE Hospital, which is far away. Another list has names of men and women who need either orthopedic leg braces or leg prostheses. These are manufactured in the Arba Minch Orthopedic Workshop as well as in Awassa and then fitted. In view of the large number of needy disabled persons, I (Rahel Röthlisberger) contacted Duane Anderson (orthopedic physician of the SCH Soddo Christian Hospital and mentor of Emmanuel). Instead of sending all of the many disabled persons

individually to Addis or Arba Minch or Awassa for treatment, the SCH Hospital has offered to do the screening and, if needed, provide the transfer to the children’s hospital or the orthopedic mobility aid post for prosthetics and braces. Thanks very much for this administrative help! In return, the benevolent fund will cover the treatment costs for needy disabled persons.



In the women’s workshop, food production is running at full speed. During the project visit in October, the expansion of the workshop was initiated. More disabled women should be taken on as workers, and a second transportation vehicle (type Isuzu Bagaj) is needed for all of the products as well as transporting people. Not least, the SCH Hospital has offered to sell us a generator in good condition, to minimize the losses of prepared food due to frequent power failures.



The good old first Minitaxi



Our dream with more load capacity



The generator offered by SCH

The shoeshiners and street kiosk salespersons work on their own in well-frequented places in the city. They have received the sheet metal roofs they had requested as shelters from the rain during the rainy season. The shoeshiners and street kiosk teams also wish to take on new disabled persons and give them work.

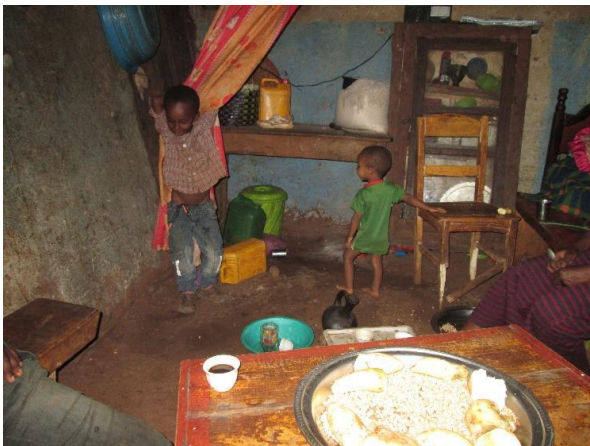
Bedframes are needed for both of Emmanuel's group shelters (men's and women's houses) so that the disabled persons no longer need to sleep on the floor. These frames were produced by the men's workshop a few weeks ago and funded by donations from Switzerland.



Prototype of the "homemade" beds so that the disabled no longer need to sleep on the floor

Disabled fathers and mothers of families cannot live with their families in the group dormitories together with the single men and women due to cultural reasons. Because they often cannot find an apartment they could afford, and because many landlords do not want to lodge "disabled beggars" in their huts, it is very difficult for them to find a roof over their heads. They have asked the Emmanuel Association for support. Duane Anderson, the hospital surgeon, is investigating the acquisition of government land and the construction of a "family house" so that the families of disabled persons can also have a home.

Perhaps some of you may remember the collapsing house that the Emmanuel Association helped to repair, which belonged to Harage, the elderly disabled man who kept bees? Harage passed away last year, and the government wanted to give the "well renovated house" to a tenant who would pay good money for it. It was only thanks to Melese's tireless effort and fight that we could keep the house so that it could be used for penniless disabled persons. In the meantime, Mesfin and his family could move in and they are very thankful! Mesfin was able to receive surgery in the autumn of 2019 (the Emmanuel benevolent fund covered the costs), he received crutches and for several weeks now, he has been working in the mobility aid workshop, with great and heartfelt thanks to all of you who contributed to this with your donations!



During the project visit, the accounting and administration were evaluated. To support and ease the load for Melese, the General Manager of Emmanuel, we found an excellent and well-trained secretary and assistant in the person of Bereket, who was hired and started in November 2019. Project Emmanuel's own accounting and ledgers are still receiving significant help from the hospital accountant Gary Vanderkooi. Since a short while ago, Project Emmanuel also has Ato Abraham, the SCH Hospital's lawyer, and Kurt, the new CEO Assistant as consultants and advisors. Many thanks to them for their valuable help.

